

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Bruce Hamburg on 7/13/09.

The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 10, line 13, the phrase "sleeve anterior end" has been replaced with the phrase --anterior end of said anterior sleeve part--.

In claim 17, line 2, "to said" has been replaced with --to a--.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of record does not disclose, singly or in combination, a coupling as claimed in detail in claim 10.

Particularly, the prior art does not teach or fairly suggest at least the following limitations (in combination with the remaining claim limitations): a sleeve comprising axially opposing anterior and posterior sleeve parts; said sleeve parts being permanently and fixedly connected at a radial lip; a support body disposed on said posterior end or said anterior sleeve part; said support body including an exterior

positioning surface disposed at a pre-determined angle so that a radius of said surface increases toward said sleeve anterior end; said interior surface of said posterior sleeve part being spaced from said exterior positioning surface of said support body for forming a free space; said retaining element including a closed annular part disposed radially adjacent to said radial lip connecting said sleeve parts; said retaining claws being movable in said free space.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAMES M. HEWITT whose telephone number is (571)272-7084. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 930am-600pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel Stodola can be reached on 571-272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/James M Hewitt/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3679